

THE BRAHMAVÂDIN.

“एकं सत् विभावदुधावदन्ति.”

“That which exists is One: sages call it variously.”—*Rigveda*, I. 164. 46.

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SAYINGS OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA PARAMAHAMSA.

1. Little children play with dolls in a room apart just as they like, without any fear or restraint, but as soon as their mother comes in, they throw aside their dolls and run to her crying “mamma, mamma.” You also, O man, are now playing in this world deeply absorbed therein with the dolls of wealth, honor, and fame, and have no fear or anxiety. If you once see your Divine Mother, you will not then find pleasure in wealth, honor and fame. Leaving off all these you will run to Her.

2. A person said, “when my boy Harish will grow up, I will get him married and leaving him in charge of the family, I shall renounce the world and begin to practise Yoga. At this the Bhagavân said, “you will never find any opportunity to practise devotion. You will then say perhaps, “Harish and Girish are very much attached to me. They will not leave my company if I now retire. Let Harish have a son and let me see that son married;” and so there will be no end to your desires.”

3. When a fruit becomes ripe and falls off itself it tastes very sweet, but when an unripe fruit is plucked and artificially ripened, it does not taste so sweet, and becomes shrivelled up. So when one has realized unity in everything, then and not till then can he have no distinction of caste. But so long as this exalted state of knowledge is not reached none can escape the recognition of superiority and inferiority in others, and as such one must have to observe caste distinctions. Even in this state of ignorance, if a man feigns perfection by doing away with all caste distinctions and living a free life, he may be compared to a green fruit artificially ripened.

4. When a storm blows, it is impossible then to distinguish between a pipul (*awantha*) tree

and a banyan (*Vata*) tree; so when the storm of true knowledge blows within a man, he can have no distinctions of castes.

5. As the water under a bridge enters in one side and passes out on the other, so the religious advices enter into the heart of a worldly man by one ear and go out by the other without making any impression upon his mind.

6. When an unbaked pot is broken, the potter can use its mud to make a new pot, but when a baked pot is broken, he does not use its pieces any longer. So when a person dies in a state of ignorance he must be born again; but when he becomes well baked in the fire of true knowledge, i.e., when he becomes perfect, he is not born again after death.

7. A boiled paddy grain does not grow again. Only the unboiled paddy grain brings forth the shoot. Similarly when a man dies after becoming perfect (*siddha*) he has not to be born again, but an imperfect man (*asiddha*) has to be born again and again until he becomes a *siddha*.

8. The heart of a boy is intact and undivided. When married half of his mind goes to his wife, and when children are born to him, he loses another quarter, and the remaining quarter is divided between father, mother, honor, fame, dresses, pride, &c. He has no mind left therefore to give to God. Hence if the undivided mind of a boy is directed towards God, he can find Him easily. It is not so very easy for the grown up people.

9. The parrot cannot be taught to sing if it becomes old, and the membranes of its throat gets hardened. It must be taught before the callow line appears and while it is young. So in old age it is difficult for the mind to be fixed on God. It can be easily done in youth.

Extract.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE VEDAS.

By kind invitation of Miss Müller, some 30 or 40 residents, nearly all ladies, gathered at Airlie-lodge. (Ridgway-gardens, on Tuesday afternoon, for the purpose of hearing an address by the Swâmi Vivekānanda, a native of India, on the "Philosophy of the Vedas." Mr. J. F. Schwann, J.P., presided, and in introducing the Swâmi, mentioned that Miss Müller, to whose kindness they were indebted for the discourse they were about to listen to, had been in India for some time and had interested herself very much in the religions of that country, and especially in the different branches of the Hindu belief. She accordingly took great interest in the course of lectures which the Swâmi had been giving in America and England, and he was sure they felt very grateful to her, for having placed her room at their disposal that afternoon. His own knowledge of the subject which was to be dealt with was exceedingly vague, and he expected it was the same with a great many of them.

The Swâmi then commenced his address, which, eloquent throughout, was listened to with the greatest interest and appreciation. "People," he said, "who are capable of seeing only the gross external aspect of things, can perceive in the Indian nation only a conquered and suffering people, a race of dreamers and philosophers. They seem to be incapable of perceiving that in the spiritual realm India conquers the world. No doubt it is true that just as the too active Western mind would profit by an admixture of Eastern introspection and the meditative habit, so the Eastern would benefit by somewhat greater activity and energy. Still we must ask, what may be that Force which causes these afflicted and suffering people, the Hindu, and Jewish too (the two races from which have originated all the great religions of the world), to survive when other nations perish. It can only be the cause of their Spiritual Force. The Hindus are still living though silent, the Jews are more numerous to-day than when they lived in Palestine. The philosophy of India percolates throughout the whole civilized world, modifying and permeating as it goes. So also in ancient times her trade reached the shores of Africa before Europe was known and opened communication with the rest of the world, thus disproving the belief that Indians never went outside of their own country. It is remarkable also that the possession of India by a foreign power has always been a turning point in the history of that power, bringing to it wealth, prosperity, dominion and spiritual ideas. So with individuals; while the Western man tries to measure how much it is possible for him to possess and to enjoy, the Eastern seems to take the opposite course, and to measure how little of material possessions he can do with. In the Vedas we trace the endeavour of the early people to find God, in their search for Him they came upon different strata: beginning with ancestor

worship they passed on to the worship of Agni the Fire God, of Indra, the god of Thunder, and of Varuna, the God of Gods. We find the growth of this idea of God from many Gods to one God in all religions, its real meaning is that he is the chief of the tribal Gods, who creates the world, rules it and sees into every heart: the stages of growth lead up from a multiplicity of Gods to monotheism. This anthropomorphic conception, however, did not satisfy the Hindus, it was too human for them who were seeking the Divine. Therefore they finally gave up searching for God in the outer world of sense or matter, and turned their attention to the inner world. Is there an Inner world? and what is it? It is *Atman*, it is the Self, it is the only thing an individual can be sure of. If he knows himself, he can know the universe; and not otherwise. The same question was asked in the beginning of Time, even in the Rig-Veda in another form. 'Who or what existed from the beginning?' That question was gradually solved by the Vedânta Philosophy. The *Atman* existed. That is to say what we call the absolute, the universal soul, the Self is the Force by which from the beginning all things have been and are and will be manifested. While the Vedânta philosophers solved that question, they at the same time discovered the basis of Ethics. Though all religions have taught ethical precepts such as 'Do not kill, do not injure; love your neighbour as yourself, etc.' yet none of them have given the reason. 'Why should I not injure my neighbour?' To this question there was no satisfactory or conclusive answer forthcoming, until it was evolved by the metaphysical speculations of the Hindus, who could not rest satisfied with mere dogmas. So the Hindus say that this *Atman* is absolute and all-pervading, therefore Infinite. There cannot be two Infinities, for they would limit each other and would become Finite. Also each individual soul is a part and parcel of that Universal Soul which is Infinite, therefore in injuring his neighbour, the individual actually injures himself. This is the basic metaphysical truth underlying all Ethical Codes. It is too often believed that a person in his progress towards perfection passes from error to Truth: that when he rejects one thought for another he must necessarily reject the first, but no error can lead to Truth. The soul passing through its different stages goes from Truth to Truth, and each stage is true; he goes from lower Truth to higher Truth. This point may be illustrated in the following way. A man is journeying towards the sun and takes a photograph at each step. How different would be the first photograph from the second and still more from the third or the last when he reaches the real sun. But all these, though differing so widely from each other are true, only they are made to appear different by the changing conditions of time and space. It is the recognition of this truth which has enabled the Hindus to perceive the Universal Truth of all religions from the lowest to the highest; it was made of them the only

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The Brahmavadin.

SATURDAY, 24TH OCTOBER 1896.

RELIGION IN INDIA.

The lovely glow of a mystic religious light which plays over the gentle and beautiful face of India has been able to stir to lively expression in these modern days of matter of fact science and prosaically heartless machinery the poetry in the depths of the great heart of no less a personage of eminence than the Czar of all the Russias. Surely there must be something inexpressibly delicate, highly inspiring, and nobly elevating in the religious history of India—the only history which she knows of herself and of which she may well be proud. In the religious history of the world India occupies a unique position. She has been the motherland of more than one great religion and the meeting place of almost all the great religions of the world. Here religions have helped each other and struggled against each other; and as it must happen in the case of rival religions, each trying in its own way to lead men and women godwards, the rivalry of religions has more than once culminated in this ancient land of religious civilisation in the proclamation of a friendship between them which is based on the truest insight into the spiritual nature of man. Mr. Ranade, a part of whose lecture on the philosophy of theism we did not deal with when we reviewed his views on a former occasion, says with great insight and truth, "Alone in all the countries of the world, India has had the privilege of witnessing this convergence of historical faith actively at work without losing its own individual characteristics." The capabilities of the Aryan race which to-day is in the forefront of the civilisation of the world have displayed themselves in this land largely in the field of religion and philosophy, which in Europe they have had mainly a political turn given to them. The advent of the Aryans into India was the first dawn of all higher civilisation in the land, although before them there were people there with a civilisation of their own. They too had their religions.

Modern ethnologists hold that there are at least

three different races in the population of India, the Tibeto-Burmans, the Dravidians and the Aryans. The first are declared to have been the ancient *Nāgas*, or snake-worshippers; the second were tree-worshippers and worshippers of goddesses and demons and spirits. The Aryans, when they came to India were the worshippers of the great powers of nature behind which they vaguely recognised a single Supreme Power. Wherever the Aryans colonised, the torch of Light and Truth, they brought with them, shed naturally enlightenment and wisdom abroad. *Saivism* and *Vaishnavism*, even as they are now, are certainly the gift of the Aryans to alkin the land of India. Under the guidance of the Aryans the religions of the pre-Aryan races in India became more and more ethical and humanitarian. *Saivism* and *Vaishnavism*, do not approve of bloody sacrifices and many of our non-Aryan *Saivites* and *Vaishnavites* are pure vegetarians. Both, in their most liberal forms, do not recognise caste distinctions, and have encouraged devotion, purity and self-renunciation. The philosophy and ethics of both are based upon the *Sāṅkhya* and the *Vedānta*, and are therefore really quite as humanitarian as those of Buddhism. It thus becomes clear that Mr. Justice Ranade, is not right in holding that Buddhism "substituted for the old animal sacrifices—the sacrifice of the animal in man as the highest form of worship and the only road to salvation." This humanising influence of religion is really as old as the *Upanishads* in this country, and all that can be rightly claimed for Buddhism is that it added an amount of practical force to this moral side of the *Upanishadic* philosophy and made it fairly popular amongst the masses. *Saivism* and *Vaishnavism* grew into strong institutions of great social power with the decay of Buddhism. The latter would posit no God for the human soul to hold communion with, and was thus moving away from the right religious track. This non-postulation of the deity was the rock upon which Buddhism wrecked, and hence it was that it had to go away from India finally. *Saivism* and *Vaishnavism*, however, gave free scope to the religious instinct of the large mass of the people of all classes of culture and moral development—the instinct that longs for divine communion and bases man's strength and hope on divine support.

The religion of the Aryans which, to start with, was of the nature of the worship of the great powers of nature, became by and by exclusively moral and ritualistic religion.

domination. The *Upanishads* proclaimed the first war against this sacerdotalism, and the neglect of the humanity of man to whatever race he belonged. Aryan or non-Aryan, man was man according to the *Vedānta*, and the culture of the heart was in every way of greater importance than the killing of beasts. The religion of the *Vedas* and the *Upanishads*, knew not pilgrimages, processions, festivities and temples—nor even the many matters of detail connected with the nature, conduct, and object of worship in the temples. These are all due to the attempt to make the religion of the *Vedānta* popular and are the result of a compromise between the forms of the earlier non-Aryan religions on the one hand and the spirit of the philosophy of the *Upanishads* and the ethics of the *Gītā* on the other. Thus, having behind itself, the true universal spirit of *Vedāntism*, Hinduism presents a double aspect when looked at from outside, which unsympathetic critics sometimes call polytheism and sometimes idolatry. A careful and scientific study and examination of the *Tantra* literature belonging to the *Śākta*, the *Śaiva* and the *Vaiṣṇava* forms of Hinduism will certainly throw a flood of light on the meaning of most of the practical details of form associated with Hinduism. The bewildering multiplicity of forms found in association with Hinduism are all made to symbolise the pure *Vedāntic* monotheism, and we hope to be able to prove in our columns the truth of this statement in future.

While going through this process of natural development and growth it was the design of providence that the religion of India should come into contact and collision with Mohammadanism. Mr. Ranade is right in holding that even before this collision Hinduism had enforced 'strict monotheism not only in intellectual apprehension but in practical conduct.' We believe, however, it was more. What appears to many careless and unsympathetic observers to-day as polytheism and idolatry in Hinduism is simply the toleration of necessary variation in the externalities of worship. In modern days, there are some critics belonging to other faiths who say that since the Hindus worship Krishna, Rāma, Śiva, Śakti, and Vishnu, and so on, they are polytheists. The repetition of what is known as the thousand names of God—*Sahasranāma*—is an act of worship with us. We have such thousand names or *Sahasranāmas* in connection with Śiva and Vishnu and Śakti and Lakshmi; and we find also the name of Śiva given to Vishnu and the name of Vishnu given to Śiva. The meaning of all this is clearly that the ways of approaching and apprehending God are taken to be innumerable; and it is really arrogating to ourselves too much wisdom to assert that there is only one way of seeking our salvation and reaching him in whom all find their rest and peace. The various images in the temples may be seen to be representative of the many ways in which the human mind apprehends greatness and the glory of God; and whether

the enforcement of a rigid unyielding monotheism even in regards to forms in the way in which the Mohammadans do it, is after all good, may well be doubted. Europe knows how dearly Christendom had to pay for committing the mistake of enforcing, against the dictates of nature and common sense, irrationally rigid religious conformity; and even the history of Islamism, particularly, that of the *Sufis* and of the very recent Bab movement in Persia, indicate how unfit and unwilling the human spirit is to get itself and all its divine aspirations pressed into one mould. It is the recognition of the need of variety and the dominant spirit of toleration towards all aspects of religion that makes Hinduism appear so diverse to all superficial observers. That this is really so can be made out more from the effect of Hinduism on Islam in India than from any effect of Mohammadanism on Hinduism. The *Sufi* movement in Persia is said to have had its origin in the Indian *Vedānta*; and even a superficial comparison of the Indian *Vedāntic* and *Bhakti* literature with the Persian *Sufi* literature will bring conviction into the heart of the worst doubter in regard to the great similarity between *Sufism* and *Vedāntism*. Swāmī Vivekānanda in his Boston Lecture on the *Vedānta* says that the *Vedāntic* spirit of religious liberality has very much affected even Mohammadanism in India and that Mohammadanism here is quite a different thing from what it is in any other country. The religion of Kabir also shows how the haughty, aggressive, and imperious spirit of Islam succumbed before the sweet reasonableness of the Divine and tolerant spirit of the *Vedānta*. The Sikhism of Nānak is also another instance in point. There are some who hold the mistaken view that Sikhism arose largely out of Islam, because rigid monotheism and opposition to caste are among the tenets of Nānak. The doctrines to be found in the *Granth* of the Sikhs are all to be found almost word for word in our *Vedāntic* literature. Further *Vaiṣṇavism* in Bengal takes into its fold even Mohammadans. The movement of modern Hinduism based on the *Vedānta* both in the form of *Vaiṣṇavism* and *Śaivism* has, as already pointed out, all along discountenanced caste distinctions. Hinduism has lent no kind of moral or intellectual support to these distinctions. That caste has continued to flourish in India in spite of the *Vedānta* is due to racial, geographical, and perhaps also political causes. And the idea that Hinduism means the recognition of caste and polytheism is one which is the result not certainly of any insight into the real nature of that religion. However Hinduism and Mohammadanism have long dwelt together in this land, have come to know each other; and they have learnt more or less how to accommodate themselves to each other.

Christianity has now entered the arena of Indian religions, and wants to be aggressive. We do not care to prophesy about the future. We only wish to point out here how far we think Mr. Ranade is right in his comparison and contrast of these two religions.

We are afraid that many Christians may not agree

with Mr. Ranade in the explanation which he offers of the Christian mystery of Trinity. Nevertheless, we feel certain that Christian philosophy itself cannot offer really any better explanation. It may be possible to explain the doctrine of Trinity from other Vedantic standpoints also. The very idea of the One being in Three and the Three being in One is possible only when the Three is to be looked upon as a three-fold manifestation of that which is in essence One and One only without a second. The points of difference are even more interesting than those of similarity, for a knowledge of the nature of this difference will help to show in which of these religions more of divine truth is embodied. Says Mr. Ranade "Both systems recognize incarnation the difference being of one or many. In both sacrifice has played an important part. With these elements of kinship there are essential differences which cannot be overlooked. The characteristics of Indian Theism, which have enabled it to maintain its identity, will cling to it through all times. There is, first, its non-historical character. It is associated with no particular saint or prophet though it has room for reverence to all saints and prophets. Then, it is not bound down to any particular revelation, but is open to the best influences of all revelations. With it, revelation is a perpetual stream which never ceases to flow". As regards the doctrine of incarnation, we have already pointed out in dealing with this question that Cardinal Newman himself held that this doctrine was borrowed by the Christian Church from India, and according to us "to understand properly the rational metaphysical foundation of the doctrine of Incarnation, even in regard to one case of actual Incarnation is to see its possibility in many others." To say that Christ is the only begotten son of God while all men are also to be looked upon as sons of God seems, on the face of it, inconsistent. The next point of difference is the non-historical character of Hinduism. This also is an advantage in its favour, for to be bound down to the teachings of a particular saint or prophet or to any particular verbal revelation is not to recognize the hand of God working always in the history of man all over the world. That God who has not left himself without a witness in any land cannot certainly be the God only of Jews, Christians, or Mohammedans. "Indian Theism is built on the rock of the direct communion of the individual soul with the soul of the Universe to which it is linked by the tie of faith and hope and love." This basis of religion in the heart of man is what is common to the whole of humanity; and it is on this basis that a true universal religion has to rise in all lands. Hinduism is therefore really more universally consonant with human nature than any purely historical religion based on supernatural and verbal revelations can ever be. The supernatural is indeed in the natural. "Indian Theism does not limit its education of man to a single trial in this world." "Eternal damnation to the sinner or eternal salvation to the righteous believer, as consequences of one short life on earth, places the soul of man, which even according to the

Christian is born out of the breath of God, in a position of great risk and high injustice. How can anything proceed from God which is not fit to go back to God? The unfitness must be only temporary, accidental, and due to causes not existent at the time of the birth of the soul; and so it must be remediable. The infinitesimally small period of trial during one life on earth ought not to determine the fate of the divinely born soul of man for eternity. The realisation of the original sinlessness of the soul of man, of the later and accidental origin of sin in association with his pure soul, his own responsibility for this association with such an unwelcome and injurious companion, the capacity implanted in him to free himself from such companionship, and the never-ceasing hopefulness of the soul to free itself from all the bondages which keep it away from its divine home—all these are more rationally intelligible in the doctrine of Hinduism than in those of Christianity. That the idea of the Omnipenetrativeness of God has to be learned by Christianity from Hinduism is an opinion recently expressed authoritatively by a great and learned Christian teacher.

More than all, "Indian Theism teaches toleration to all, self-sacrifice and the duty of love, not only of man to man, but also of man to all animated beings." This is the crowning glory of the Hindu religion. The recognition that all religions possess varying degrees of truths in them, that love and self-sacrifice are the only means for the salvation of the soul, and that the whole of animated creation is worthy of the love of man are taught so well and so prominently in no religion as in Hinduism. It is true that Christianity is a religion of love, but do Christians to-day live altogether or even largely the life of love? The world knows Christendom to-day for its force, struggle, competition, conquest, politics, commerce, and greed. If the heathen often mistakes even the missionaries who carry Christ's religion of love to his door to be merely the precursors of these present day characteristics of Christian nations, he cannot be said to be very far wrong; for modern history has, in more than one instance, only justified too well the suspicions of the heathen. The civilisation of the West is a purely political one supported by material strength and industrial and economic resources. The civilisation of India has had all along the dominant tone of spirituality about it. That is why the Indian man is on the whole less aggressive and more loveable, loves more and hates less, and shows exemplary patience even under unjustly inflicted pains and sufferings. "The power of organisation, active hatred of sin, and indignation against wrong doing in place of resigned indifference, a correct sense of the dignity of man and woman, active philanthropy and a feeling of fraternity, freedom of thought and action, these are Christian virtues which are to be incorporated in the national character." This sentence of Mr. Ranade might as well appear that these virtues are purely Hindu. The religion of Christ who taught brotherly love may

no thought for the morrow because God would take care of them as He takes care of the sparrows and the flies of the field. The political spirit of Europe has given Christianity itself a political turn, and religion is based in Europe upon organisation, conformity and control, and tells more upon the material progress of communities than upon the culture of the heart and the spirit. Thus whatever special virtue, other than what is purely religious, we notice in Christian civilisation—all that is the result of non-Christian and pre-Christian forces working in the midst of people who are Christians. Christians consciously or unconsciously make the mistake of crediting to Christianity alone all the good that has flowed into the channels of European civilisation from the mountain tops of Hellenic philosophy and politics, Roman law and government, and Teutonic chivalry and freedom. We hope Mr. Ranade also does not commit this mistake, although we agree with him in thinking that the East has to learn many things from the West, and that the present increased intercourse between the East and the West has come about in accordance with the benevolent design of Providence to enable man to realise his appointed destiny more and more satisfactorily in the years to come. It is in India that the great lesson of religious toleration has been taught and followed with zeal and conviction from time immemorial. The land of Sri Krishna, Buddha, Asoka, and Akbar has before it a grand religious future. India, the motherland and the meeting place of religions will surely attain to the glory of the peace-maker between contending religions and the harmonizer of the divine ideals working in the hearts of men.

THE TALMUD: ITS ETHICS, DOCTRINES, AND SAYINGS.

By SWAMI KRIPA'NANDA.

(Continued from page 34).

We have already seen that the *Talmud* contains almost all the ethical doctrines of the Gospels, but it offers also a great number of maxims for which we search in vain in the New Testament. Take for instance those referring to study and the acquisition of knowledge. "No boor," we are taught "can become pious, nor an ignorant man a saint." (*Aroth*, chap. 2, mish. 6). Hillel taught: "Study is more meritorious than sacrifice." Again, "The man who bunts after fame shall lose his good name; he that does not care for knowledge goes backward; he that does not progress in knowledge commits suicide; but the man that uses learning for self-glorification deserves to be forgotten." (*Abot*, l. 13.) Rabbi Tyra said: "The best preacher is the heart, the best teacher is the book, the best book is the world, the best friend is the law." "Say not," exclaims the *Talmud*, "that the scriptures and the explanation of the law are in order that people may

praise me as a *Chaham* or sage, as rabbi or master; but study from pure love to God and to bind thyself closely to Him through the knowledge and understanding of His word. Love, not reward, love of truth, let this be the word of redemption when thou sittest at the feet of the Masters of the Law." (*Nedarim*, 62.) "See," it says, "there are studies which are ice-cold, without soul-warmth and without love:—these are those whose object is not self-ennobling and the instruction of others but only selfish purposes. Oppose to such are those studies which seek and wish nothing but truth and knowledge and their diffusion; these are studies of love to God and thy neighbour." (*Sukkah*, 49.)

The *credo quod absurdum* could never find acceptance among a race who are admonished over and over again never to believe anything that does not agree with reason and common sense. Among other contributors, it was especially Rabbi Mair, considered the best of Talmudical fable writers, who remonstrated against blind faith in the authority of eminent men. He enjoined his pupils to use their own intellectual faculties and rely on the result of their own unbiassed criticism. The following story goes to show how much the Talmudists held on to the use of reason.

On a certain day, Rabbi Eleazar ben Hyrcanus replied to the questions proposed to him concerning his teaching, but his arguments being found inferior to his pretensions, the doctors present refused to admit his conclusions. Then Rabbi Eleazar said: "My doctrine is true, and this Karoub tree which is near shall demonstrate the infallibility of my teaching." Immediately the Karoub tree obeying the voice of Eleazar arose out of the ground and planted itself a hundred cubits farther off. But the Rabbis shook their heads and answered, "The Karoub tree proves nothing." "What" cried Eleazar, "you resist so great a miracle? Then let this rivulet flow backwards and attest the truth of my doctrine." Immediately the rivulet, obeying the command of Eleazar, flowed backward towards its source. But again the Rabbis shook their heads and said, "The rivulet proves nothing. We must understand before we can believe." "Will you believe me," said Rabbi Eleazar, "if the walls of this house wherein we sit should fall down?"—And the walls obeying him began to fall, until Rabbi Joshua exclaimed, "By what right do the walls interfere in our debates?" Then the walls stopped in their fall out of respect to him but remained leaning out of respect to Rabbi Eleazar, and remain leaning to this day. But Eleazar, mad with rage, cried out: "Then in order to confound you and since you compel me to it, let a voice from heaven be heard!" And immediately the *Bath-Kol* or Voice from heaven was heard at a great height in the air, and it said, "What are all the opinions of the Rabbis compared to the opinion of Rabbi Eleazar? When he has spoken, his opinion ought to prevail." Here upon Rabbi Joshua arose and said, "It is written, 'The law is not in heaven, it is in your mouth and in your heart. It is in your rea-

son'; for again it is written, 'I have left you free to choose between life and death and good and evil.' And it is in your conscience, for 'If ye love your Lord and obey his voice within you, you will find happiness and truth.' Wherefor then does Rabbi Eleazar bring in a Karoub tree, a rivulet, a wall, and a voice to settle questions of doctrine? And what is the only conclusion that can be drawn from such miracles but that they who have expounded the laws of nature have not wholly understood them, and that we must now admit that in certain cases a tree can uproot itself, a rivulet flow backwards, walls obey instruction and voices sound in the air? But what connection is their between these observations and the teaching of Rabbi Eleazar? No doubt these miracles were very extraordinary, and they have filled us with astonishment; but to amaze is not to argue, and it is argument, not phenomena, that we require. When therefore Rabbi Eleazar shall have proved to us that Karoub trees, rivulets, walls, and unknown voices afford us by unusual manifestations reasonings equal in value and weight to that reason which God has placed within us to guide our judgment, then alone will we make use of such testimonies and estimate them as Eleazar requires." To the same purport the famous commentator Maimonides says: "When thy senses affirm that which thy reason denies, reject the testimony of thy senses and listen only to thy reason."

Of the high esteem in which learning and the office of a teacher are held among the Jews, the following, extracted from the *Talmud*, gives evidence: "He who learns from another one chapter, one halacha, one verse, one word, or even a single letter is bound to respect him." (*Avoth*, chap. 6, mia. 3.) "There was drought, and the most pious men prayed and wept for rain, but none came. An insignificant looking at length prayed to Him who causes the wind to blow and the rain to fall, and instantly the heavens covered themselves with clouds and the rain refreshed the earth. 'Who are you?' They cried. 'whose prayers alone have prevailed?' And he answered, 'I am a teacher of little children.'"

Education is one of the virtues the interest of which the Jew considers he enjoys in this world, while the capital remains intact against the exigencies of the world to come. These are:—The honoring of father and mother, acts of benevolence, hospitality to strangers, visiting the sick, devotion in prayer, study, and promotion of peace between man and man. (*Shabbath*, fol. 127, col. 1) In illustration of the last virtue, is the following:*

"A certain Rabbi Baroka one day was on the market place of Be-lefet, (one of those vanished towns for which one would search in vain on a modern map of Palestine,) when he encountered the Prophet Elia. Great Elia for whom even now delays the Jew on the Sabbath eve has a seat every day in the Be-lefet table. "I wonder," asked the prophet,

"if among this crowd there be a child of the world to come?" The Rabbi in his moral severity said he did not believe there was one among them. While thus discussing they saw two common-looking men passing by, and Elia pointing them out said, "These two are children of the world to come." Then Baroka anxious to know by what they had made themselves worthy of the highest reward asked them, "What is your profession?" and they answered: "We are clowns. We cheer up the sad, and when people quarrel we endeavor to establish peace between them."

The Talmudists were quick to recognize the fact that man is bound with innumerable ties to the world, that for our lives, our destinies, our very thoughts we are dependent on our fellow-men, in short that the individual *Karma* is intricately interwoven with the *Karma* of Humanity. This dependency upon others was the ever-recurrent subject of reflection and discussion of the *Talmud* teachers. None realized this dependence more than they who saw their own lives constantly subjected to its hard and heavy torture. But while realizing their mutual dependence on one another, the *Talmud* sages also realized in this inter-dependence the necessary condition for the welfare both of the individual and the whole of mankind. "In the whole alone," we read in *Midrash rabba*, "we are of some significance, but outside of it, nothing, for in the whole alone our individual shortcomings are mitigated." This thought most beautifully shines forth in the explanation given of the symbol of the *Lulab*, the festive nosegay prepared by the Jews for their Feast of Tabernacles. "In this nosegay," they say, "there are represented two kinds of fruit-bearing trees, the palm and the *hadar*, and two other kinds of trees which bear no fruit at all, the myrtle and the water-willow—as here the one belongs to the others, as the former without the latter would constitute but half of the nosegay; so you too are not complete if taken out of the whole of which you are a member." "In your midst too," adds the *Midrash rabba*, "there are some who unite virtue with culture, some who practice virtue without culture, others who possess culture without virtue, and others again who have neither the one nor the other. These things however are only noticed in their incomplete fragmentary form, so long as they are disunited and separate, but as soon as they enter into the circle of the whole, all deficiencies are balanced and the one alleviates the other."

We are constantly admonished in the *Talmud* that the greatness of virtue and vice, the sanctity of love and friendship, the condemnation of hate and malice, ought to be measured and judged by the motive alone. "In the outward action," we read in *Sanhedrin* f. 38, "we often are all alike, but it is the motive alone that distinguishes man from one another." And in the *Midrash rabba* we find almost verbatim the wise precept of the *Bhagavad Gita*, that we should abandon in our actions all selfish motives and perform them only as a sacrifice to God. Antigonus of Socho, who flourished in the third century before the common era, taught: "Be not

* In *Be-lefet* in the *Talmud* and in the *Shabbath*. "Nard and honey were there."

like servants who serve the master with a view to receiving rewards; but like servants who serve their master without the view of being rewarded, and then you will be truly God-fearing." (Whom does this not remind of the injunction in the *Bhagavad-Gita*—"Do not be incited to action by the hope of receiving reward"?) The worship of God out of love is therefore given preference to that which is dictated by fear.

The above extracts are, we believe, sufficient to prove on the one hand Monsieur Renan's assertion that "concerning alms, piety, good works, gentleness, the desire of peace, complete disinterestedness of heart, Jesus had little to add to the doctrines of the synagogue," and that, on the other hand, the ethical doctrines of the Jews need not blush in the presence of any of later origin.

But what of their crude ideas of the Deity? Do they not believe in an anthropomorphic personal God? The following definition of God, gathered from various passages in the *Talmud*, gives us the Talmudist's conception of Deity.

"God is an infinite (*Midr. rabba Gen.*, chap. 68,) unique, spiritual, (*Treat. Chagigah*, fol. 15,) eternal, necessary, providential being, (*Midr. rabba Exod.* chap. 3, and *Treat. Barachoth*, fol. 9,) who cannot be conceived by human understanding (*Treat. Barachoth*, fol. 31). He does not exist in the world, but the whole world exists in him, (*Midr. rabba*, chap. 68) wherefore God is also called *Makom* (infinite space). He can be perceived only through his works, (*ibid.* chap. 1).

(To be continued.)

Correspondence.

A FEW POINTS OF VEDANTIC CONTROVERSY.

To the Editor of the *Brahmavadin*.

We shall here try briefly to examine a few of the arguments adduced by the *Advaitins* and their opponents the *Dvaitins* in support of their respective views and shall see how far they have made out their respective cases. The major portion of the controversy between the two sects pertains to whether or not there exist a material world *per se* and without any reference to our thought. First arises the question, what do you mean by a thing in itself. Isolate a thing from all its relations and try to assert it by itself, at once you find that you have negated it as well as its relatives. The thing in itself is nothing. The absolute or pure affirmation—just because it is pure—is its own negation. Referred to itself and to itself only, it ceases to be itself; for its definition, that which made it itself, was its relation to that which was not itself.

Then the world external *per se* has no meaning, except a world without any reference to thought.

What do we mean by an external world, a world without any necessary relation to our mind? If at all we give an answer to this question it must be in terms of knowledge (consciousness), and we will be thus engaging ourselves in the hopeless task of explaining matter or the external world, i.e., what is not mind, in terms of mind. In fact it is impossible for us to explain or for another to understand how anything can exist without any reference to thought.

Granting that such a phrase does mean something, that an existence *per se* outside us has some meaning, how is it, it is asked, that you know that such a thing does exist. The answer, as ninety per cent of the common people would give, is that we know it for the simple reason that we feel it, and are conscious of it. Hamilton said that we have no business to question the veracity of consciousness; for to doubt it would itself be a state of consciousness. We know how Mill replied. He said as Hamilton himself had admitted elsewhere, that we must keep distinct the fact of the veracity of consciousness testifying and the fact of the veracity of consciousness testified to. The former, one has no business to question, while the latter is in every way open to doubt. The mere fact that we are conscious of an external world is no guarantee for the existence of an objective reality corresponding to it.

So also said Berkeley. He showed clearly the fallacy in assuming external existences corresponding to our ideas. To many of his time as to many even now, these phrases sounded novel. They could not understand how an *idea* of a chair could be differentiated from the *thing* chair. To them the two phrases were identical. Berkeley pointed out that the identification was wrong. He said that when we have an idea we are conscious only of the idea and nothing more; in other words, what we really know is our own state of consciousness, and anything, corresponding to these states, outside us is a pure assumption.

A little reflexion will convince us that Berkeley is so far correct. The existence of an external world is certainly an assumption, but whether the assumption is warranted or purely gratuitous is the point of contention. As it has already been said, we know nothing beyond our own states of consciousness. Upon this premise all rational theories must take their stand.

Let us now proceed to examine the nature of our conscious states in the nature of our ideas. When we do so we find that all of them are not alike. Some ideas can be marked off from others by the possession of certain strong characteristics. We find that while some ideas are created and made to vanish by the effort of our will, others force themselves upon us, and remain there against our will. We find, that some ideas come in clusters or groups in a fixed order, while others come and go at random. These and certain other differences between our ideas enable us to classify them into subjective and objective.

The question then will naturally arise, whence this difference? It is in the answer to this question that the point of struggle is to be found between the *Advaita*, the *Dvaita* and *Vishvâdvaita* sects, and especially between the first two the struggle has been very keen. The answers of these are exactly opposite. The *Dvaitins* answer that it is the material world which is the cause of this difference of feeling in us, while the *Advaitins* deny the capacity of matter to be such a cause, even if it had an existence.

We must not however be led away with the idea, that, when the *Dvaitins* say that matter is such a cause, they deny the agency of God. For the purpose of our present controversy, the difference between the two sects can be better stated thus: while the *Dvaitins* say that matter is the cause of our objective consciousness, the *Advaitins* affirm that it cannot be such and hence is not.

Let us now proceed to examine some of the arguments adduced on either side.

The *Dvaitins* affirm, that matter is the cause of our objective consciousness. The *Advaitins* reject this for the following reason.

They ask how can dead matter, which has nothing in common with mind, act upon it? How can such essentially different entities as mind and matter react upon each other? If they do act upon each other, then, only two alternative conclusions are possible; and they are that either (1) *mind is simple matter* or (2) *matter is simply mind*, either of which is fatal to the *Dvaita* cause.

This is a pertinent and strong objection.

Some try to get over the difficulty by declaring that, after all, the soul is a kind of very subtle matter. But let it be the subtlest matter possible, nevertheless it *must* be matter; and as such must be amenable to the laws of matter as well as the grossest of it. This will not improve their position. If the *Dvaitins* say that by such subtle matter they mean something other than matter; the reply is that they have no business to use the words in this sense.

To resume: The *Advaitins* ask, how can mind and matter act upon each other? Matter is extended, i.e., bounded by space, and mind is unextended, i.e., not limited by space. In short the cause must be of the same nature as the effect. There must be something common between the reacting entities, a link through which the mutual change may take place. In the absence of any such thing it is impossible for one entity to act upon another.

If anything is the cause of the objective consciousness in us, it must be ourselves or some one of like nature with us, but not the external world as stated by the *Dvaitins*.

The *Advaitins* though demolishing thus the *Dvaitin's* position have not a very satisfactory explanation of their own views to give.

According to Hegel, philosophy has till now started with some fixed assumptions, such as the one of subject and object, mind and matter. In doing this it has forgotten that these oppositions can have any meaning only if we suppose a unity that tran-

cends them, in reference to which alone all differences can be explained. This unity is the basis of consciousness, which we unconsciously assume; and just because it is pre-supposed, it is not present to the ordinary consciousness, which therefore, always thinks of the object as essentially different from the subject. This unity philosophy brings to light and by the aid of it transforms our ordinary view of the world. "Thus the popular consciousness asserts that the object and subject of knowledge are essentially distinct, scepticism points out that knowledge, as involving their relation towards each other, is inconsistent with such distinctness. In other words, scepticism proves, on the hypothesis of the distinction of subject and object, that knowledge is impossible. But the true conclusion from this argument is that the object is not absolutely distinct from the subject that knows it, but in its distinctness is yet essentially related to, and so one with it. The dialectic of the sceptic therefore, proves only, that each limited idea contains its own negation and thus carries us back to that identity which is presupposed in all distinction, and in the light of which each distinction is reduced to its proper meaning and value, as a manifestation or expression of the unity."

Thus, the *seeming* duality of our thought is *actually* a unity and as the *Advaitins* affirm the moment we throw off the shackles of our senses which are the cause of the notion of duality, in other words the notion of *limitedness*, we shall realise our true nature, i.e., we shall know that we are the infinite and the absolute. And well does Hegel say *that there is no way from the finite to the infinite; we can only reach the latter if we deny and cast loose from the former.*

A confusing objection due to the imperfect understanding of the *Advaita* position is often times brought against it by the *Dvaitins* to this effect. Granting that you ultimately succeed in extricating yourselves from the shackles of your senses and know that you are God, there will yet be two entities namely, one the you or the knower, and the other your knowledge, which in the present case is the idea or knowledge of your being God. So long as God and knowledge are separate there will be two existences, and if there are two existences, where, the *Dvaitins* ask, is your monism?

The *Advaita* position is a plain one. When they say two things, they mean two things occupying space, for example, God, and matter. Surely we cannot talk of knowledge or ideas as occupying space. Hence when they posit an infinite God with infinite knowledge, there is only one entity occupying space, and as such the doctrine is quite consistent with monism.

They even go the length of saying that the existence of God with matter is a physical impossibility. They declare that the *Dvaita* theory is incompatible with reason. They say that the eternal co-existence of two space-occupying bodies, such as God and matter, be they both infinite, or one infinite and the other finite, is physically impossible—for it is evident, that, in either case, the combined body

occupying the whole of infinite space, there will be no room for another body to exist in.

The very conception of two bodies in space must imply that they limit each other and as such must be finite bodies.

Driven to this position, what can the *Advaiti* say? He cannot evidently say that God is finite. The unwise privilege to give any and every inconceivable attribute to God is gladly resorted to, and an assertion to the following effect is often made. God is such a peculiar being that he does not fill space. But the counter-reply would be that this statement clashes with the omnipresence of God. If God is not present in space, what does His being present everywhere mean? If it be asserted that the omnipresence of a being is possible without its occupying space the reply would simply be that it is a contradiction in terms and is contrary to the laws of human thought. The statement means nothing beyond words.

Now to sum up: God is or is not infinite. If he is not infinite, he is no God, if he is infinite he cannot consistently occupy space with matter. But God is infinite, hence he must occupy space without matter, i. e., solely and infinitely.

Let us now consider the very important and by far the most powerful objection ever raised against the *Advaita* theory. It is, how did the perfect *Brahman* become the quasi-perfect or imperfect *Brahman* with name and forms?

This is certainly a formidable objection and has not as yet received a satisfactory answer.

First it must be observed that it is not God that has changed and become imperfect, it is his knowledge or consciousness that has become so quasi-perfect; whatever change takes place is in his consciousness and not in him. He is the same and unchanging to all eternity.

In the light of this view our foregoing objection resolves itself into (i) how did any change take place with the result that the one become two, and (ii) how did the infinite become the finite, though of course the two questions overlap each other.

As regards the first objection Mrs. Annie Besant explains it by a truly "marvellous picture in the concrete of the differentiation in the Supreme." "Suppose," she says, "you took a microscope in hand, and suppose that in looking through the microscope you took the first germ of living matter out of which a plant or animal was to grow, you would see beneath your eyes under the microscope a tiny speck of matter and in that speck of matter a single spot; as you watched it you would slowly become conscious—you would not say when it began, you would be unable to say exactly when first you were able to see it—but by slow change imperceptible in the beginning and only becoming perceptible gradually, as you watch through the great magnifying power of the glass, you would see in the central spot a separation and you would see towards each end of the speck of matter two spots appearing and within this one speck of matter and the central spot a slow strange gathering to-

gether of the material substance, until this change would appear when complete, that instead of one you had two, and these two apart at the two poles, as they are called, of this little mass of matter. So that you would have two separate distinct spots, duality where there had been unity, separation internally where there had been none. You would see the two poles within one mass. Out of the same substance—for there was only one—by internal differentiation two separate and yet not separated bodies have formed." After saying that these bodies are different beings, different in action, she says that "between the two everything formative occurs and there is built up the germ of the coming plant, then the plant grows and differentiates further and develops into three root stock leaves, &c." Here we see how the one may become two, the one being still one.

As regards the second question, how did the Infinite become finite, the following, though not a satisfactory solution, is not yet out of place.

Bearing in mind that any change is really in the consciousness of and not in God, we may proceed to say that a quantity of water is not an inapt analogy to illustrate the point.

Take a quantity of water, it must necessarily contain or be made up of an infinite number of infinitely small particles of water; in other words the water is the aggregate of an infinite number of infinites. And yet the water looks certainly finite. But the nature of an aggregate product cannot be directly opposed to that of the elements of which the aggregate is made up. Hence the water cannot be really finite and yet by some reason or other, by some illusion, it puts on a finite appearance. We say that the sky is infinite though we do not comprehend the whole of it and we say that the water is finite.

This is apparently a paradox and yet we must accept it.

Now apply the analogy to the case of God. His infinite conscious feelings standing for the infinite particles making up the water. His infinite consciousness by some change of the eternal immutable *Atmā* appears to itself (being self-conscious) as finite (Of course God who is at the bottom is the *conditio sine qua non* of all this change).

The analogy is very imperfect yet as illustrating in some way the unknowable becoming the knowable*, it may pass.

It will thus be seen that the substratum or the *Brahman* remains intact while it is His knowledge (consciousness) that has really undergone change, and the moment a change which is the reverse of *Atmā* takes place, the illusion vanishes and His consciousness (He) becomes aware of its infinite nature. Here is indeed a great difficulty which the human mind cannot easily get over.

But this consciousness is different from the relative consciousness which has just now vanished; it is what Hegel calls the "basis of consciousness" and what can aptly be called absolute consciousness. And well nigh does Hegel approach this theory. When

* The infinite becoming the finite.

it (the mind) draws back the universe into itself as it does in knowledge, it at once includes in itself the outward expanded totality of this manifold world, and at the same time over-reaches and realises it taking away its externality to itself and to the mind reflecting it all into the unity of thought."

N. KRISHNASWAMI ROW.

(Continued from page 40)

people who never had religious persecutions. The shrine of a Mahomedan saint, which is at the present day neglected and forgotten by Mohamedans, is worshipped by Hindus! Many instances may be quoted illustrating the same spirit of tolerance. But the Eastern mind could not rest satisfied till it had found that goal which is the end sought by all humanity, namely, Unity. The Western scientist seeks for Unity in the atom or the molecule. When he finds it there is nothing further for him to discover, and so when we find that Unity of soul or Self which is called *Atman*, we can go no further. It becomes clear that everything in the sense world is a manifestation of that one Element. Further, the scientist is hereby brought to the necessity of recognising metaphysics as when an atom having neither breadth nor length is yet supposed, when combined, to become the cause of extension, length and breadth. When one atom acts upon another some medium is necessary. What is that medium? It will be a second atom. If so, then the question still remains unanswered, for how do these two act on a third—a manifest *reductio ad absurdum*. This contradiction in terms is also found in the hypothesis necessary to all physical science, that a point is that which has neither parts nor magnitude, and a line is length without breadth. These cannot be either seen or conceived. Why? Because they do not come within the range of the senses. They are metaphysical conceptions. So we see it is then finally the Mind which gives the form to all perception. When I see a chair, it is not the real chair external to my eye which I perceive, but an external something plus the mental image formed. Thus even the materialist is driven to metaphysics in the last extremity.

At the close of the address, Mr. Schwann cordially thanked the Swami, on behalf of all present, for the intellectual pleasure he had afforded them, and announced that he had expressed a desire to form some classes in Wimbledon. They would be free and meet at Airlie-lodge, by the kindness of Mrs. Müller.—*The Wimbledon Post*.

Notes and Thoughts.

We find the following passage in "The Travel in the East of Nicholas II, Emperor of Russia" wherein India is described as the land of spirituality and wisdom.

"To-morrow, India! Sleep, deserts mine eyes. I vainly sought it in the balmy night: in the gold and crimson of the rising sun, the dawn greets the promised

land, where the heavens are pervaded with the charms of love, but passion is conquered by an unspeakable sadness—where life glows bright, yet all is as a dream, and breathes with beauty irresistible as death. O land of daring dreams and soaring thought! Thou risest out of the azure deep, whose mournful moaning echoes sadly back the discord reigning in the weary heart. India lies before us! here holiness and peace appeared in visions unto men contemptuous of pleasure; since their age the people live the self-same life, yearning for the Divinity, for freedom and atonement. Here, where the earthly realm of sorrow borders on the heavens, and when the soul is crushed by unceasing torments, this magic land calls us into a world of wonders, into the realm of the eternal mysteries and of boundless wisdom."

Speaking of the world-wide unity, before the Oak Beach Christian Unity, Swami Vivekananda said that all religions were, at the bottom, alike. This was so, although the Christian Church, like the Pharisee in the parable, thanks God that it alone is right and is willing to admit that all other religions are wrong and in need of Christian light. Christianity must become tolerant before the world will be willing to unite with the Christian Church in a common charity. God had not left Himself without a witness in any heart, and men, especially men who follow Jesus Christ, should be willing, he said, to admit this. In fact, Jesus Christ was willing to admit every good man to the family of God. It was not the man who believed a certain something, but the man who did the will of the Father in Heaven who was right. On this basis—being right and doing right—the whole world can unite.—*New York Tribune*.

"Never think or say that your own religion is the best. Never denounce the religion of others," is a Buddhist commandment; and "There ought to be reverence for one's own faith and no reviling of that of others," is the twelfth edict of Asoka.

In the following lines the great American poet Whittier gives expression to a saving spaciousness of thought which would make more than any thing else for the advancement of brotherhood and toleration throughout the world.—

So welcome I from every source
The tokens of that primal Force,
Older than heaven itself, yet new
As the young heart it reaches to,
Beneath whose steady impulse rolls
The tidal wave of human souls;
Guide Comforter and inward Word
The eternal spirit of the Lord!
Nor fear I aught that science brings
From searching through material things:
Content to let its glasses prove,
Not by the letters' oldness move
The myriad worlds on worlds that course
The space of the universe:
Since every where the Spirit walks
The garden of the heart, and talks
With man, as under Eden's trees
In all his varied languages.

What greater proof of God needs man than this?—*Wise Himself*? "His true his mind can never understand itself, but equal true it is that man His limit knows. Who thus the firmest holds The finite leaves to grasp-patience made."

—*Spenser*

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